

I am Alene Taylor and I represent the Board of Supervisors of Kings County. What we want you to do is really see the problems which CALFED's proposal to idle farm ground in our county will cause us. What General Motors is to Detroit, farming is to the San Joaquin Valley. When a part of G.M. closes it affects other related industry, throws people on the unemployment line, and lowers the tax income to local government. Because of our Valley's air quality problems, we could not bring enough industry to our area to fill the gap in employment and lost tax dollars. The social problems that come with unemployment are already in abundance in our county: substance abuse, child and spousal abuse, and high crime rates.

A CALFED staff person explained to me that my concerns about idled farm ground were unfounded because the whole thing was just a white paper not part of the process. Later in that meeting held in Pittsburgh, representatives of both the Sierra Club and the Audobon Society spoke. Guess what, they both seemed to feel that water conservation and idling farm ground was the only worthwhile part of the CALFED proposal.

The environmentalist's true agenda is coming out into the open. The best use of ground is to be habitat not produce crops. The best use of water is to flow out to sea without being diverted to irrigate crops. Building storage facilities to provide water for a growing population only encourages that growth. If you don't build it, they won't come. The truth is they will come and they will be born and we will be fighting over a pot of water that isn't adequate right now. The only solution is to build a bigger pot.

Collaboration requires that all parties see past the stereotype of their opponents they have presented to the public: polluting industrialist, water-wasting farmer, hippie tree-hugger, etc. It also requires that they not expect to get everything their own way. They must respect, if not agree with, their fellow committee members. I feel that farmers have moved farther down this road than environmentalists. We worked to pass Senator Costa's water bond even though we did not directly benefit because it was seen as a necessary first step to the success of the CALFED agenda. Our interest in that agenda is storage and delivery; availability and prices that are reliable enough for our bankers to count on. Without these elements, we have no buy in to or support for CALFED in the San Joaquin Valley.

To be specific, we support Alternative II as the preferred option. We have our doubts that Alternative III would work and the price tag would be too high. Alternative I is no alternative because it provides no additional storage.

We support the CALFED process. It is as you say "the only game in town" that might possibly come up with a plan for water

who will live in this state in the next millenium. It cannot be any worse than the present beaurocratic nightmare created by poorly thought out legislation and endless lawsuits that passes for water policy today.

Alene Taylor
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District 5